

What is claimed is:

1. A sheet-like member cleaning device for removing dust particles from a sheet-like member which is being fed by a feed system, comprising:

a brush roller assembly rotatable in contact with a surface of the sheet-like member which is being fed by the feed system;

a duct surrounding a portion of said feed system and housing said brush roller assembly; and

air flow generating means for generating an air flow in said duct to prevent dust particles from entering said feed system.

2. A sheet-like member cleaning device according to claim 1, wherein said air flow generating means comprises:

an air suction unit communicating with an air outlet defined in said duct:

an air discharge unit communicating with an air inlet defined in said duct; and

a flow path communicating with said air suction unit and said air discharge unit, for circulating air through said duct.

3. A sheet-like member cleaning device according to claim 1, further comprising:

dust removing means disposed in said duct and held in

contact with at least a tip end of said brush roller assembly, for removing dust particles from the tip end of said brush roller assembly.

5           4. A sheet-like member cleaning device according to claim 2, further comprising:

dust removing means disposed in said duct and held in contact with at least a tip end of said brush roller assembly, for removing dust particles from the tip end of said  
10 brush roller assembly.

5. A sheet-like member cleaning device according to claim 1, wherein said brush roller assembly comprises:

15           first and second brush roller pairs disposed at a spaced interval in the direction in which said sheet-like member is fed; and

drive means for rotating said first brush roller pair in a direction which is the same as said direction in which said sheet-like member is fed, and rotating said second  
20 brush roller pair in a direction which is opposite to said direction in which said sheet-like member is fed,

wherein said first brush roller pair is rotated at a speed higher than a speed at which said sheet-like member is fed.

25           6. A sheet-like member cleaning device according to claim 2, wherein said brush roller assembly comprises:

first and second brush roller pairs disposed at a spaced interval in the direction in which said sheet-like member is fed; and

drive means for rotating said first brush roller pair in a direction which is the same as said direction in which said sheet-like member is fed, and rotating said second brush roller pair in a direction which is opposite to said direction in which said sheet-like member is fed,

wherein said first brush roller pair is rotated at a speed higher than a speed at which said sheet-like member is fed.

7. A sheet-like member cleaning device according to claim 3, wherein said brush roller assembly comprises:

first and second brush roller pairs disposed at a spaced interval in the direction in which said sheet-like member is fed; and

drive means for rotating said first brush roller pair in a direction which is the same as said direction in which said sheet-like member is fed, and rotating said second brush roller pair in a direction which is opposite to said direction in which said sheet-like member is fed,

wherein said first brush roller pair is rotated at a speed higher than a speed at which said sheet-like member is fed.

8. A sheet-like member cleaning device according to

claim 4, wherein said brush roller assembly comprises:

first and second brush roller pairs disposed at a spaced interval in the direction in which said sheet-like member is fed; and

drive means for rotating said first brush roller pair in a direction which is the same as said direction in which said sheet-like member is fed, and rotating said second brush roller pair in a direction which is opposite to said direction in which said sheet-like member is fed,

wherein said first brush roller pair is rotated at a speed higher than a speed at which said sheet-like member is fed.

9. A sheet-like member cleaning device for removing dust particles from a sheet-like member which is being fed by a feed system, comprising:

a housing surrounding a portion of said feed system; first and second brush roller pairs disposed in said housing at a spaced interval in the direction in which said sheet-like member is fed; and

drive means for rotating said first brush roller pair in a direction which is the same as said direction in which said sheet-like member is fed, and rotating said second brush roller pair in a direction which is opposite to said direction in which said sheet-like member is fed.

10. A sheet-like member cleaning device according to

claim 9, further comprising:

dust removing means disposed in said housing and held in contact with at least tip ends of said first and second brush roller pairs, for removing dust particles from the tip ends of said first and second brush roller pairs.

11. A sheet-like member cleaning device according to claim 9, wherein said drive means comprises:

clutch means for keeping the directions in which said first and second brush roller pairs are rotated regardless of the direction in which said sheet-like member is fed.

12. A radiation image information reading apparatus for two-dimensionally reading information representing at least characters and an image carried by a stimuable phosphor sheet which is being fed by a feed system, comprising:

a reading unit for reading the information from said stimuable phosphor sheet;

a feed system for feeding the stimuable phosphor sheet to said reading unit;

a cleaning mechanism disposed in said feed system upstream of said reading unit;

said cleaning mechanism comprising:

a housing surrounding a portion of said feed system; and

an air suction unit for pressurizing an interior space of said housing with respect to an external atmos-

phere, for preventing dust particles from being attached to surfaces of said stimuable phosphor sheet.

13. A radiation image information reading apparatus according to claim 12, wherein said housing has an air inlet for introducing air into said housing and an air outlet for drawing and discharging air introduced from said air inlet, whereby dust particles on the stimuable phosphor sheet in said housing can be guided by air introduced from said air inlet toward said air outlet and then discharged from said housing from said air outlet.

14. A radiation image information reading apparatus for two-dimensionally reading information representing at least characters and an image carried by a stimuable phosphor sheet which is being fed by a feed system, comprising:

a reading unit for reading the information from said stimuable phosphor sheet;

a feed system for feeding the stimuable phosphor sheet to said reading unit;

a cleaning mechanism disposed in said feed system upstream of said reading unit;

said cleaning mechanism comprising:

a housing surrounding a portion of said feed system; and

a brush roller assembly disposed in said housing in contact with a surface of the stimuable phosphor sheet whi-

ch is being fed by the feed system.

15. A radiation image information reading apparatus according to claim 14, further comprising:

5 dust removing means disposed in said housing and held in contact with at least a tip end of said brush roller assembly, for removing dust particles from the tip end of said brush roller assembly.

10 16. A radiation image information reading apparatus according to claim 14, wherein said brush roller assembly comprising:

upstream and downstream brush roller pairs disposed in a spaced interval in the direction in which said stimuable  
15 phosphor sheet is fed;

said cleaning mechanism further comprising:

drive means for rotating said upstream brush roller pair in a direction which is the same as said direction in which said stimuable phosphor sheet is fed, and rotating  
20 said downstream brush roller pair in a direction which is opposite to said direction in which said stimuable phosphor sheet is fed.

17. A radiation image information reading apparatus according to claim 16, wherein said drive means comprises:

25 a single drive source for rotating said upstream and downstream brush roller pairs.

18. A radiation image information reading apparatus according to claim 16, wherein said drive means comprises:

5 a drive source for rotating said upstream brush roller pair at a speed higher than the speed at which said stimula-ble phosphor sheet is fed.

19. A radiation image information reading apparatus according to claim 14, wherein said cleaning mechanism further  
10 comprises:

a flow path for circulating air through said housing.